

**Bible Reading:** Psalm 107 1-7, 33-37

**Hymn: Now thank we all our God** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s99dNPKYtHk>

Now thank we all our God,  
With heart and hands and voices,  
Who wondrous things hath done,  
In whom his world rejoices;  
Who from our mother's arms  
Hath blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love,  
And still is ours to-day.

O may this bounteous God  
Through all our life be near us,  
With ever joyful hearts  
And blessed peace to cheer us;  
And keep us in his grace,  
And guide us when perplexed,  
And free us from all ills  
In this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God  
The Father now be given,  
The son, and him who reigns,  
With them in highest heaven,  
The one eternal God,  
Whom earth and heaven adore;  
For thus it was, is now,  
And shall be evermore.

**Prayers:**

With all your people, on earth and in heaven, we praise your name, O God, for you alone are worthy of adoration. And you reign supreme beyond space and time. In you is the fullness of perfection; in you is our hope of salvation; in you is the promise of life eternal. With all your people, we praise your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Let us make our confession to God.

God of mercy forgive us our limited vision and our reluctance to trust in what we cannot see.

Forgive our preoccupation with the here and now and our failure to seek the things above.

Forgive our earthbound thinking and our feeble sense of the communion of saints.

Rekindle in us, by your Holy Spirit, the fire of your love that with clean hands and pure hearts we may serve you faithfully on earth and come at last, with all your saints, to the peace and joy of heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

In Christ we are set free. Through Christ we are forgiven. **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

**Collect of the Day**

Holy God, you have called witnesses from every nation and revealed your glory in their lives. Grant to us the same faith and love that, following their example, we may be sustained by their fellowship and rejoice in their triumph, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Old Testament Reading Joshua 3: 7-17**

Throughout my life I have followed a succession of colleagues, some who have been brilliant at their job and been quite an act to follow, others not so good, meaning that expectation has been high for the new kid on the block and this whole process of succession can be quite a daunting prospect. There is a risk of hero worship and an equal risk of disappointment.

Throughout the Old Testament God raises up leaders for his people many of whom have huge shoes to fill and one by one they may well have felt to be quite inadequate. This story reminds us that Joshua doesn't need to be as good as, or indeed better than Moses and here at the mighty river Jordan, he doesn't need to be an impressive leader, all God requires of him is to be an obedient leader. The passage begins with God promising to exalt Joshua, yet what we see is the glory of God shining through and the miracle demonstrates God's authority over the forces of nature.

*Consider:*

- *What motivates you? Faced with challenges as Joshua was, what matters the most? The welfare of the people, or your own standing in society?*
- *Can you recall times in your own life when you have had to put yourself to one side so that you can do what is best for the Kingdom of God, for your neighbours, your family, your friends or the Church?*
- *In an age where status appears to be of paramount importance and peoples lives appear to be judged by how many followers they have on Twitter, how important is your social standing to you? How much do you want to be admired?*

**A time of prayer:**

United in the company of all the faithful, let us pray for the church throughout the world and for all who seek to follow Christ in this generation. Through them and through us, your kingdom come **Your will be done.**

Let us pray for the world and all its peoples. Let us pray that those in authority in this and all nations may seek justice and peace for all. Your kingdom come **Your will be done.**

Let us pray for those in need, especially . . .

and for all who minister to those in need. Draw near to all with your healing love. Your kingdom come **Your will be done.**

Remember in your mercy all who have gone before us especially those who were significant in each of our faith journeys. Join our prayers with those of the whole company saints. Your kingdom come **Your will be done.**

Lord of the church **hear our prayer and make us one in heart and mind to serve you now and always. Amen.**

### ***The Lord's Prayer:***

#### **Gospel            Matthew 23: 1-12**

The Americans will vote on the new US president in just a few days' time and I think that the world will look on with interest. Over the last few weeks there have been claims made on both sides of the election campaign with each candidate trying to discredit their opponent and I am glad that I am not one of those who will make the decision. I believe that we look to the leaders of the nations to give us an example to follow, to be role models, yet they so often appear to let us down.

It would seem that the leaders of Jews in the time of Jesus fell foul of some of the same issues that we see today, they were enjoying the status of their leadership and there is a feeling that we see little of God in what they are professing and it would appear that they had little regard for people, an issue clearly of paramount importance to Jesus.

#### *Consider:*

- *As we move into the winter months, our news is crammed with the social needs as we live through this pandemic. Where do you see the greatest need in your community, are there people living in poverty? How easy is it for us to recognise need?*
- *It would seem that one of the big challenges through the period of lock down, has been the impact on mental health. This kind of health issue is by its very nature difficult for the outside world to see. Reflect on what might be the tell-tale signs and do you see them in anybody you know? What do you do about it?*
- *Who is responsible for looking after those in need? The Government? Charities? Families? Friends? What is the Churches role in social ministry today?*

#### **Hymn: In an age of twisted values**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z2GLXs0rNB4>

In an age of twisted values,  
we have lost the truth we need.  
In sophisticated language,  
we have justified our greed.  
By our struggle for possessions,  
we have robbed the poor and weak.  
Hear our cry and heal our nation;  
your forgiveness, Lord, we seek.

We have built discrimination  
on our prejudice and fear.  
Hatred swiftly turns to cruelty,  
if we hold resentments dear.  
For communities divided  
by the walls of class and race,  
hear our cry and heal our nation;  
show us, Lord, your love and grace.

When our families are broken,  
when our homes are full of strife,  
when our children are bewildered,  
when they lose their way in life,  
when we fail to give the aged  
all the care we know they need,  
hear our cry and heal our nation;  
help us show more love, we plead.

We who hear your word so often  
choose so rarely to obey.  
Turn us from our wilful blindness;  
give us truth to light our way.  
In the power of your Spirit  
come to cleanse us, make us new;  
hear our cry and heal our nation  
till our nation honour you.

#### **A prayer of blessing**

May your grace, love and peace, inspire and strengthen us now, and in the days to come. In Jesus' name we ask this. Amen.